



U.S. Department of Justice

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NEWS SUMMARY:

United States Attorney Steven M. Biskupic announced today that Leong Tian Kum (DOB: 3/21/69), a resident of Bangkok, Thailand, was sentenced by District Judge Lynn Adelman to 41 months in prison for smuggling live, protected, and endangered wildlife into the United States from Bangkok and for laundering money generated by smuggling. In sentencing Kum, the court granted a motion filed by the United States to depart upward from the otherwise applicable sentencing range based on reliable evidence that Kum had smuggled "girls" from Thailand into Singapore for forced prostitution.

In July 2003, a federal grand jury indicted Kum for shipping undeclared wildlife into the United States in Federal Express packages which had been falsely labeled as containing handicrafts, art, or stuffed animals. The animals were not accompanied by any of the permits required by federal law and an international treaty known as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

According to court documents, agents intercepted over 170 tortoises, turtles, tree monitors, water dragons, and other animals concealed in Federal Express packages shipped by Kum from Thailand to customers in the U.S. As part of his plea agreement, Kum acknowledged the market value of the intercepted packages and other wildlife smuggled by Kum was between \$120,000 and \$200,000. Court records also show that some of the shipped animals died en route to the United States.

Kum entered a guilty plea to the above charges on November 26, 2003. Reid E. Turowski (DOB: 12/9/74), the owner of Captive Bred Specialties in Waukesha, who was also charged in the case, will be sentenced on April 16, 2004.

The case was investigated by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The case was assigned to Assistant United States Attorney Richard G. Frohling for prosecution.

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